

LETTER H.

TO LORD CASTLEREAGH.

*On the Message of the Prince Regent,
and the Parliamentary Proceedings
thereon.*

WILLING TO WOUND, AND YET AFRAID TO
STRIKE.

MY LORD,

If I were to study for the remainder of my life, I could not fall upon a definition of the late Message, more true and complete, than that which is contained in this single line from the pen of the best of poets. But, why are you *willing to wound*? I can see reasons enough, and you have already seen them from my pen, why you should be *afraid to strike*. I have read your speech, and also those of the other persons who seem to feel as you feel; and I still can see no reason whatever for war against France; I can see no reason why we should not remain at peace with that country and with all the world; while I see very great danger to this country and to the rest of Europe in a renewal of hostilities.

The war of 1793 was called a *Crusade*, and very justly so called. By some it was decreed a crusade in the cause of religion and social order; by others, a crusade against liberty. That it was a war of kings and nobles, and priests, against the enemies of kingly, and feudal, and ecclesiastical Government, all the world must allow; and, it is impossible to look at the present state of things without perceiving, that Europe is, all of a sudden, come back to the state of 1793, with this difference in favour of the French, that they are now in the actual enjoyment of almost the whole of the benefits promised them by the advocates of the revolution. You seem to have a very different opinion of the matter. That opinion, as it has been communicated to us through the Parliamentary reports, I am now about to examine; premising here, that it appears to me to be very erroneous to anger success against France because her Emperor is ready to

make to us, as it is asserted he is, all sorts of sacrifices in order to obtain peace; for, it ought to be recollected, that the leaders of the Republic, in the year 1793, went much further in this way than the Emperor has yet gone; and still the Republic, when, at last, driven into a war of defence, was found able to frustrate the designs of all her enemies, and, indeed, not only to defend her own soil, but to invade and conquer a large portion of the soil of those who had attacked her.

In the speech, to which I have above alluded, your Lordship sets out with the position, that the late events had led to an order of things likely to *release the world from dangers and calamities; to restore the natural and social system; to restore the body politic of Europe; to improve the state of Europe; to preserve the tranquillity of the world;* and that the return of Napoleon had served to *blight the prospects* which the great labours of the Allied Powers had operated to produce. You seem to have regarded these positions as universally admitted to be true; for you did not make the slightest attempt to prove the truth of them. As to the "natural and social system;" as to the "body politic of Europe;" I do not know the meaning of these phrases, and shall not, therefore, for the present, dispute about them. But, in my view of the matter, the state of Europe was NOT improved by the events to which you referred; in my view of the matter, the world was NOT released from dangers and calamities by those events; and, I think, it is now pretty clear, that those events did NOT tend to preserve the tranquillity of the world. If, indeed, we look upon the fall of superstition and of feudal power as a calamity, then it must be confessed, that the success of the Allies did promise to release a part of the world from calamity; and, if we look upon the re-establishment of the Pope, the Jesuits, and the Inquisition, on the one hand, and the extinguish-
ment of the Republics of Holland, &c.

ice, and Genoa, on the other hand, as an *improvement* in the state of Europe; then, it must be confessed, that the successes of the Allies had improved the state of this important quarter of the globe; but, there was another quarter of the globe, which your lordship wholly omitted, at which I greatly marvel; because the merit of endeavouring to re-
"store the *natural and social system*" in that country; the merit of endeavouring to *improve* the state of America, was exclusively our own; unless, indeed, the Allies did, as it was asserted, by our news-papers, they had done, make a secret contract not to interfere in our war with the transatlantic republicans; and, even in that case, their share of the merit was very small indeed.

My Lord, what would I give to know precisely the meaning of your words, when you talk of the SOCIAL SYSTEM! Until we know this, however, there is no such thing as approving of any of your conclusions. We have seen you at war against NAPOLEON, and against Mr. MADISON, at one and the same time. We have seen, within the space of four months, troops in the pay of England invading both France and America; in possession of the cities of *Paris* and *Washington*. Were both of these Chief Magistrates enemies of the "Social System?" I must again remind you, that the press in England denominated Mr. Madison a rebel and a traitor, as they now denominate Napoleon; that they declared that no peace could be made with James Madison, as they now declare for the second time, that no peace can be made with Napoleon Bonaparte; that they insisted on the necessity of carrying on the war till the *mischievous example* of a Government, founded on a democratical rebellion, should be *destroyed*; that they urged the necessity of prosecuting the war against America upon the *same principle* as it had been so successfully prosecuted against France; and, that they published with impunity a declaration, which they ascribed to one of the Lords of the Admiralty, and gave it as if delivered by him in parliament: in which declaration it was stated, that we must carry on the war till James Madison should be *deposed* in like manner as *Napoleon had been deposed*. It is necessary that I also remind you, that a circular address of the Lords of the Ad-

miralty to the Fleet, directly after the abdication of Napoleon, expressed a confident expectation, that the war against America would end in a way to give "*lasting tranquillity to the civilized world.*"

Now, my Lord, what would I give to know, whether you look upon the state of things in America as coming within your view, when you talk about the "Social System!" Because the state of things there bears a strong resemblance to the state of things *now* existing, or, at least, fast approaching, in France. A Chief Magistrate, a Legislature, elected by the people; no sovereignty acknowledged but that which proceeds from, and resides in the people; no feudal rights; no superiority claimed by birth; no privileged orders; no dominant church; no compulsory payments to ministers of religion; no religious tests; no restraint on the press as to matters of opinion; perfect equality of civil rights. So that, if this state of things do not belong to the "Social System," it would seem, that the world would still be in a very unsatisfactory state, though the Bourbons were again on the throne of France. Does your Lordship mean, that the "Social System" is restored in Spain? In Italy? At Genoa? It would be conferring a great favour on the nation to let us have a *yea* or *nay* answer to this question; because we should then know, if we are to go to war, precisely what we are fighting and toiling to restore and establish.

Your Lordship's next positions are: that the return of Napoleon to power is by *no means* the effect of the will or the wish of the people of France, and, that it is *quite clear*, that the event is to be ascribed wholly to *artifice* and the overwhelming influence of a military chief and *his army*! You are a cool, a very cool man, my Lord, or I should think, that this must have been a misrepresentation of your words. What! believe that Napoleon, an exile in Elba, could land with 600 followers, and go 500 miles along the high road, and then enter Paris, without a single hand raised against him, through many very populous and strongly fortified towns, without the good wishes of the people! Really this must be that sort of faith which is able to remove mountains. In my last letter to you and in my letter to the late king.



of France, I have *proved*, that the people of France did wish, because their interests compelled them to wish, for Napoleon's return; but, how strange is it for us now to be told, that the *army alone* wished it, when it is not more than ten months ago, that we were assured that the army held him in the utmost contempt! Can this nation still believe all these contradictory assertions? It is notorious, that the English nation were, for years, made to believe, that the French army was composed, not of Volunteers; not of men engaged in war for the love of glory; but of men, *dragged to the ranks in chains*. How many volumes have we read on the horrors of the *Conscription*? Did not this whole nation believe, that the army of Napoleon were a set of poor souls, who had been led captive into the service; who had been coupled together on their way like convicts going to our Hulks? Was not this our belief? Had not the English press succeeded in making us believe, that this was the description of men serving in the French armies; and, that these unfortunate beings sighed for the moment, when they should be restored to their homes, where their miserable parents were cursing the cruelty of their Chief? And yet, Oh! strange to record, you now tell us, that this same Chief comes from exile and thrusts out a mild and benevolent sovereign, solely by the attachment borne towards him, by this same army! What, then; these people *loved* chains and thumb-screws. They not only followed all over Europe; they not only ventured their lives in the service of the man, who had dragged them from their homes *in chains* and put them to the *torture*; but, having been released, having been *delivered* from his power, and taken into the service of a *paternal*, sovereign, they bring back into their country, and place in command over themselves, him who had treated them with all sorts of cruelties. Really, my Lord, though I have often read of people who have been whipped, thumb-screwed, chained, and otherwise *tortured* by their tyrants, I never did before, either read, hear, or dream of people so treated, who were *attached* to the said tyrants, who wished to keep such tyrants in authority, or, who would not, if they had the power, tear such tyrants to pieces.

In order to make out the case of dan-

ger sufficient to justify even *preparation*, it was, however, necessary for you to insist upon this wonderful attachment of the army to Napoleon; an attachment not to be weakened by his reverses in war nor by their own personal sufferings under his command, nor by his abdication, nor by his exile; an attachment such as few men in the whole world have ever had the happiness to experience. It was necessary for you to insist upon this almost miraculous attachment in order to make out your case of *danger* to the *repose* of Europe. But, it appears to me, that you, in your anxiety to establish this point, overlooked the danger of another sort: namely, the danger to be apprehended from this very attachment, *in case the attack Napoleon*. We all know, that even a small army, firmly attached to their chief, is a formidable object. What, then, must a large army be bound together and urged on by such a feeling?

That it must be large, and very large indeed, is, according to you, certain; for, unless it were such, it could not have kept in awe *thirty millions of people*, several hundred of thousands of whom were armed national guards, and not a few of whom had devoted life and fortune to the defence of the King. Yet, strange to say, we are told, that this army is very weak as to numbers and discipline; that it has neither cannon nor stores; and that it wants what is called the *material*. Well, then, my Lord, take the thing this way; allow the army to be weak and insufficient; and, then, why need we be alarmed? If Napoleon has the army and the army *alone*, is for him, and, if that army be weak, how can we wish to see France in a better state for our interests?

Your Lordship appears to assume as a fact *admitted*, that France is now under the absolute sway of "*a military chief and his army*," which you are pleased to call the *System of France*. But I deny this fact, upon the truth of which all your subsequent reasoning depends. Napoleon has declared, that he rules only by virtue of the people's choice; he explicitly disavows all notion of military authority; he says he is to go *on*, and by the will of the people. He has called into power men known to be decidedly hostile to the very system you describe; these men have declared to him, that he is to hold his power upon these conditions. He has made overture, pressing the

sincerity of his declarations. In short, it is manifest, that to hold his place in the Republic, he must seek peace, and pursue it, *unless he be first attacked*.

I think that it is clear that the system of France is a system of peace, and of a disinclination to foreign conquest. A Frenchman, who reflects, must perceive, that the extension of the boundaries of France can be no benefit to her; that, if the *French empire* were again extended to Rome, Hamburgh, and Cadiz, *France* would become little in proportion. Paris could take no pleasure in seeing Rome and Amsterdam and Madrid divide her greatness with her. And, such men as *Varnet* and *Rooder* would not fail to perceive, that the *liberties* of France could never exist, while her Chief was also the Chief of so many other nations. In some part or other of an empire so stretched out, there must always be cause for the presence and operation of armies. The Chief must have enormous powers. Despotism is alone capable of keeping internal peace and order amongst the people of an empire like that of Napoleon; and, therefore, to secure those liberties, and all those inestimable advantages, which have been the consequence of the French revolution, France must refrain from extending her boundaries to any considerable distance. And, my lord, does not all the intelligence we receive from France clearly shew, that this is the principle, upon which the French government is now acting? We may talk of the *army* as long as we please, but is it the army that have called for the declarations against foreign conquest? Has not their Chief told them, that they must *forget* their former conquests? Has he not told them, that he shall confine himself to the old French frontier? And, if he had thought, that he had been received back merely as the means of leading France to foreign conquest, would he have made such declarations? To answer this question in the affirmative, would be to set human nature as well as common sense at defiance.

Your Lordship is made to describe France as being "*merely a warlike nation*." But, I will transcribe the whole passage, embracing as it does several points which call for remark. It is reported in these words: "However sanguine he might have been in his hopes that the ultimate issue of the late events would lead the world back to its

"ancient state of sound policy and social feeling, he certainly never had participated in that precipitate judgment that there would be no other transition than from a state of war with France to a state of peace. The danger which threatened Europe, from the military character of France, was more deeply rooted in the state of things which made France *merely a warlike nation*; which *sunk all the other classes of society there in subordination with respect to the army*; and it was obvious that if France should suddenly endeavour to break from that *morbid and unnatural condition in which she was*, a re-action of her armies was to be expected, which would perhaps place that country politically at the feet of her soldiery. And had not such been *actually the case*? Who would say that the return of Bonaparte to the capital of France had taken place *with the wishes of the French people*? (hear, hear!) Who, on the contrary, would hesitate to say that it was *in violation of the recorded feelings of the nation, unequivocally in favour of the ancient dynasty*? It was one of those revolutions produced by an army which could only hope, in such a revolution, to find its usual rewards in the *blood and plunder of other nations*. That army had, however, disgraced itself by violating all those oaths to its lawful Sovereign which would have had weight upon honourable minds. Whatever might be the ultimate decision, of this Government and its Allies, it appeared to him that the only calculation which Europe had to make was, *whether it would be more for her interests to meet the power that now threatened her, at its outset, before it was established in the full vigour of its resources, or to remain united in a state of military organization as a necessary precaution against danger*.—He confessed he was not then in a state to communicate to the House all that would be necessary to enable it to judge upon the whole of that question, and therefore he thought he acted more *in the spirit of the constitution*, and in what became him as a Minister of the Crown, in leaving that topic to stand upon its own ground as it might appear hereafter from the course of events. The Noble Lord

“ then adverted to what ought to be the
 “ line of policy which this country should
 “ adopt with respect to the continent,
 “ and deprecating the idea of hur-
 “ rying, or goading the continent
 “ into a war, maintained that we should
 “ wait to watch the spirit and feelings
 “ which might manifest themselves
 “ throughout Europe in this great crisis,
 “ At the same time, if the case turned
 “ merely upon difficulties, he trusted
 “ that as we had saved the world in con-
 “ currence with the continental powers,
 “ with the same concurrence we should
 “ be ready to preserve it. (hear, hear!)
 “ It was a proud reflection for this coun-
 “ try that at the end of so long a war
 “ we had at the present moment, accom-
 “ plished every thing which was desira-
 “ ble for securing the balance of Europe
 “ and the independence of States; and
 “ had established more in fact, than had
 “ been done at any former period.”

Really, your lordship appears to me to have profited very little of the opportunity of judging of the state of France and of what, in such an event as the present, was likely to be the predominant feeling in that country; or it appears to me impossible, that you should not have seen in France all the elements of lasting peace and of repugnance to mere military sway. If, indeed, you had seen France before the revolution, you would have found her essentially subordinate to the army; for then, the noblesse, who owned the land, and who exercised all sorts of powers under the feudal system, were military men in virtue of their very titles. They were all soldiers, and all the people were their vassals. The noblesse were born to fight as officers and the people were born to fight under them, without even the possibility of promotion. This, perhaps, was that “social system,” after which your lordship appears so profoundly to sigh. But, this system of military chiefs and their vassals is no more. No man in France is now born to command another man. Their feudal rights are annihilated. The land of France is distributed in small parcels amongst the great mass of the population; and those who have land to till are never prone to wander from it. Instead of a miserable peasantry, toiling along under all sorts of burdens, hemmed in by restrictions on every side, subjected to petit despots in almost every square mile, daring hardly to look at the

hares, partridges, pheasants, deers and wild boars, which laid waste their fields and devoured their crops: instead of that wretched, cowed-down race, who, for ages, were the butt of English scorn and ridicule, you would, if you had turned your eyes that way, have beheld in France the country spread over with proprietors of small parcels of land, well dressed, well-fed, bold in their manners, sensible in their remarks, understanding their rights and their duties, fearing no nation, but anxious for peace with all. This, perhaps, your lordship would have regarded as “a MORBID and unnatural condition”. At any rate, such IS the condition of France, let the fact excite mortification and envy where it may.

You are pleased to describe the return of the Emperor Napoleon to the capital of France as being “in violation of the recorded feelings of the nation unequivocally expressed in favour of the ancient dynasty.” When, my lord? When 500,000 Russians and Germans were quartered on the French soil? when the Prussians and Russians garrisoned Paris, and its environs? when an English army, at the same time, was stationed in Bourdeaux and on the banks of the Garonne? Was it then that the people of France hailed so unequivocally the return of the old dynasty? But, suppose they did? did this shew, that France was a mere military nation; or, that it was inclined to peace, and the arts of peace? The truth is, that the French nation sighed for peace; and if the Bourbons had kept their promise; or, rather, if they could have kept their promise, the nation would have remained satisfied; or at least quiet. But, when the people saw, that continual inroads were made upon their liberties and their property; when they could hardly hope to escape being driven back to the slavery of 1789, then they opened the way for Napoleon, who, say what we will, was hailed as a real deliverer of his country.

You say, that “the only calculation which Europe has to make is, whether it be more for her interest to meet the power, which now threatens her, at its outset, before it be established in the full vigour of its resources, or to remain united in a state of military organization, as a necessary precaution against danger.” That is to say, whether we are to march at once to the attack of

France, or lie upon our arms to be ready to fight her at any moment. The latter, by all means, my lord, if we have *only this choice*; but, I do not think this superabundant precaution at all advisable. I do not like the idea of an *income tax* and *loans* in time of peace; and neither will they be necessary, if we make a cordial peace with the Emperor of France, and enter into those relationships of *commerce*, which will be mutually advantageous, and which, I dare say, we may enter into if we choose. However, if this be our only alternative. If we must have war: or peace as expensive as war; if this be the state to which we have come at last, I really cannot see much ground for the boast contained in the close of your speech: namely that we have *saved the world*; that we can *preserve the world*: and that it is a *great reflection*, that we have *accomplished every thing that is to be desired for securing the balance of Europe and the independence of states*. If we have done all this, what a folly is it to be afraid of France? Why need we care who sits on the throne of that country? Why need we keep on foot a war establishment, or go, at once, to war? The truth is, if we must either now go to war, or live in a state of armed truce, we have accomplished nothing, except adding 31 millions sterling a year to the taxes necessary to be raised for the payment of the interest of the debt. We went to war against the Republicans of France, in 1793, to keep their disorganizing principles from spreading, and now we see Messrs. Carnot, Roederer, Gregoire, Francois, Cambaceres, Boissy D'Anglas, &c. again at work upon the *Rights of Man*. Two-and-twenty years of war and blood and the expenditure of 600,000,000 of borrowed pounds and as many more millions in taxes have only brought us as to the point at issue, to the very spot whence we started. Yonder are the Bourbons again on the frontiers of France, collecting their emigrants about them; and yonder are the German powers, preparing, if they get our money, to invade that same France, and in the same quarter. To boast, therefore, that we have "*accomplished*" our object, appears to me, my lord, to be perfectly ridiculous; and, if your countryman BURKE, were still alive, he would rave like a Bedlamite at the thought of leaving as a penny in

our pockets, or a shirt to our backs, while the "*regicides*" of France were suffered to put "*forth blured sheets of paper*" about the *Rights of Man*." If we have now peace with France; if we are enabled to reduce our military and naval establishments to 6,000,000 of pounds a year; and if we obtain a most favourable commercial treaty with France, we shall have *accomplished nothing* by the war; our twelve hundred millions of money and our hundreds of thousands of lives will have brought us nothing in return. But, if we are to lie upon our arms, our *loss* is incalculable.

There is one thing, which I acknowledge the war has done; and that is,—*prevented hitherto a parliamentary reform*; saved for 25 years the Borough System, which is, perhaps, a component part of the "*Social System*." And, I will frankly own to your Lordship, that, though I can discover no danger to any thing else in a peace with France, at this time, I do discover in a solid peace with that country great danger to the Borough Mangers and their trade. We shall see in France a system, and, I dare say, an admirable system of representative government. It may not be found practicable, in that country, to extend the right of voting so widely as it is extended in America; but we shall, after all the experience of the last 25 years, see something done which shall give the people a solid security for their liberties and their property. And if we do see such a government fairly in action for some years; if we have an intercourse with France; if the press in that country be free for all opinions, religious as well as political, falsehood, hypocrisy, and corruption must begin to look sharply about them.

In an article which will be subjoined to this letter, your Lordship will see a true picture of the present state of France, even before she began scarcely to enjoy repose. You will there see the excellent, the wonderful effects of the republican revolution, its laws, its establishments. The authority is unquestionable; the veracity, or the judgement of the author, no man in England will doubt. Mr. BIRKBECK is known to be one of the greatest and best farmers in all England; one of the men the very best qualified to make an estimate of the state of society; and his work shews him to be a man of great talent as a writer. We are therefore

warranted in placing perfect reliance on what he says. And is it possible to contemplate the picture he draws, without feelings of real satisfaction? The man who can look upon this picture in comparison with that drawn by Mr. ARTHUR YOUNG of the same people, before the revolution, and not feel delighted at the change which has taken place, must carry about him the feelings of a demon. But, at any rate, we ought to conclude from such comparison, that it is impossible that success should attend any effort, no matter by how many nations made, to compel the French people to return to their former wretched state.

I am aware of all the danger to us, or, I should say, to the Borough Monger and Intolerant system from this cause. The religious persecutions; the tyranny; the execrable cruelties practised in France under the Bourbons, at the instigation of the Priests, brought the Cotton Manufactory and a great deal of science, industry, and virtue from France to England. And, who can tell what our Borough System, our Test Acts, and Libel Laws may carry from England to France? America has been the receiver of hundreds of thousands of the most enterprising, most ingenious, and most useful of our people. The state of her manufactures; the wonderful progress they have made: the astonishing progress of her commercial and military marine: these are, in no small degree, owing to the emigrations from these islands. Oh! my Lord, how powerful are the allurements of Liberty! And liberty really has no other meaning than this: *that men shall be governed by laws made by themselves, or by persons whom they have chosen.* This is the fact in America. Only think what must be the feelings of a man, passing, at once, from under our libel laws to a country where he may say, or write, *just what he pleases* about religion, and about all transactions and all men, so that he confine himself to the *truth*! Only think how a man must leap and bound about, when he finds himself at liberty to promulgate *any opinions* that may come into his head! Only think of the pleasure which talent, which integrity, which virtue in all her shapes, must experience at seeing TRUTH have fair play!

America, however, is at a distance. France is nearer to the South of England than Yorkshire is. The communication between England and France is easier

than between Hampshire and Norfolk. A true account of the country must soon be obtained. When one family has found France a desirable change, another will follow: and so on. The moderately rich will go for the sake of living in affluence: those who can but rub along in England, will seek ease and plenty: the miserable will seek bread: and the artizan and manufacturer will seek advancement in life. Who will not endeavour to avoid paying his share of the 40 millions sterling a year, which is called for on account of the National Debt? And who will not remove a few score of miles to enjoy political and religious liberty? *The language!* What is the language? The French Protestants soon got over that inconvenience. And, besides, if a really *free* government be established in France, the absence of a State Church, the absence of Poor Laws, the absence of Libel Laws as to religious opinions, the absence, *comparatively*, of taxes of every sort, the absence of birth without merit, and the absence of a great many other things that I could name, would draw whole colonies to that country, leaving out of view the inducements of climate and of the delicious produce of the soil. Even the Lords and Gentlemen who have lately *petitioned for a Corn Bill*, have, almost in so many words, told the Houses of Parliament, that France is a country to go to in search of ease and comfort. They have reminded the Houses of the trifling taxes in France, and they have, with great emphasis stated, that the French pay *no tythes*. Even this description of persons have become recruiters for emigration to France. If, then, we have peace with France, and the French government be such as the friends of freedom will admire, what must be the consequences with regard to our population, our arts and manufactures, our agriculture, our commerce, our means of paying the interest of our national debt?

What, then, must we have war, in order to prevent emigration to France? Horrid as the idea is, I know that it is entertained by many, because I have heard many maintain the affirmative of the question. Yes: *war* with France, lest the people of England should be tempted to migrate to that country! The idea is, however, as foolish as it is detestable: for war would only render England worse to live in: and, therefore, unless, by war, we could totally destroy both France and America,

it would, in the end, only augment the evil intended to be prevented.

No: it is not *by war* that we shall prevent a migration of our people. The way to keep at home our artizans and manufacturers and our moderately rich men, is, to take care, that they shall be unable to find, any where else, more happiness: that is to say, greater abundance, greater ease, and more real freedom. If France become nearly what America is in point of freedom. If the only difference should consist in the *title* of the Chief Magistrate. If the way to riches and honours be alike open to all men, of whatever religion. If the press become really free, as it is in America. If every man paying a tax partake in choosing the makers of the laws. Really, my Lord, if this should be the case, it appears to me, that *Reform* in this country will, at last, become absolutely necessary: and, therefore, would it not be as well to *begin now*? Messrs. Reederer, Carnot, Gregoire, &c. are at work in France. They have had great experience. They have had their eyes fixed upon us and upon America. They know all about our situation. They have before them the history of our Borough System, and of the efforts which have been made to reform it. They have heard, I dare say, of the famous affair of Mr. QUINTIN DICK. They have read SIR FRANCIS BORDETT'S Speeches, MAJOR CARTWRIGHT'S Addresses, and the Petitions to the Honourable House. These will serve them as a guide. They will know what to choose and what to shun. Therefore, my Lord, let us try to out-do them. Let us begin first. Let us leave them no room to surpass us. In short, for that is the *all-in-all*, let us have a *thorough reform of the Commons House of Parliament*, and then we shall need no war to prevent the contagion of French principles nor to prevent Englishmen from migrating to France.

And what are the objections to this reform? What are the objections to giving payers of taxes a right to vote for those who make our laws? It has been impudently asserted, that such a reform would produce *anarchy and confusion*; that it would introduce *law and unprincipled men into the Legislature*, and into the *offices of State*. But has this been the effect of free elections in America? We see there the Legislature and the

table, most able, and even the most opulent Citizens. The people of England are of the same excellent character as those of America. In short, the two nations are of one and the same family. The same habits, the same manners, the same turn of mind, the same attachment to freedom, the same love of country. And, it is notorious, that, in the few instances where elections are *popular* in England, the people have almost uniformly chosen men distinguished for their talents and joining talents to fortune. Where, then, is the *danger*? Who is it that need be *afraid* to suffer the people of England to choose their representatives, in the same manner as the people of America choose theirs, especially as no one wishes to change any thing as to the powers, privileges, and prerogatives of the Peers or the King?

The old assertion, that the example of America was nothing, seeing the smallness of her population, the poverty of her people, and seeing that her constitution had not yet been brought in contact with the touchstone of war. This old assertion is now contradicted. She is nearly, if not quite, as populous as this island; her people are rich; her cities luxurious; her commerce immense; and she has just come with honour out of the most arduous war in which any nation was ever engaged, and that, too, not only without any internal convulsion, but without seeing her mild Government resorting to any one measure of safety beyond the usual course of law. And, *why* did it not? Because it was elected by the people; because it had the people's confidence; because, even if its measures had displeased the people, the remedy was always at hand in an approaching election. Such a Government stands in no need of soldiers in time of peace. It wants no protection against the people, because the people, can at a few months from any given day, change their representatives. Thus is public economy natural to *such* a state of things. Public economy prevents heavy taxation. This is another, and one of the greatest securities for internal peace as well as happiness. Whether this be the "*Social System*" I do not know; but, certain I am, that it is the *happy system*; the system of comfort, of security, of willing submission to the laws, of attachment to country, of loyalty, and of peace.

To be sure, France has not yet furnished us with so tempting an example; but, if she should not do it, what will *then* be said against admitting all Englishmen paying direct taxes to participate in choosing their representatives, leaving the privileges and prerogatives of the Peers and the Crown wholly untouched? I am at a loss to guess; but I am at no loss to foresee what would be the consequence of the refusal. This is the race; this is the rivalry, which I wish to see between England and France. Not a rivalry in war; not a rivalry in commercial restrictions; but a rivalry in the pursuit of freedom: a rivalry in which I am not at all afraid that we should surpass her. Our natural character; our persevering attachments to country; our unwearied loyalty; that modesty which indisposes individuals to aim at predominance; that moderation which limits our views of exaltation; that plain good sense, that justice, that mercy, which, if left to ourselves, guide us in all our decisions, that almost unbounded confidence between man and man, which gives to words the value of gold; our happy local situation; and a hundred other traits and circumstances: all seem to personify themselves and to exclaim? Why is not England the freest and happiest country in the world? What need has she of armies in time of peace? Why should she know of any force beyond the Sheriff's Wand and the Constable's Staff? Why should her Government be uneasy at the propagation of any opinions or principles, political or religious?

How happy should I be, my Lord, if I could hope, that you and your colleagues would take these questions into your *serious consideration*; if, having now seen that foreign war and domestic coercion, have so completely failed, at the end of so many years, to produce that *safety*, which has been the professed object of your predecessors, in power, as well as of yourselves; if, after these fruitless endeavours, I could hope, that you would make merely a *trial of Parliamentary reform*; of that great measure, which would renovate the natural spirit, make us bear our inevitable burdens with cheerfulness, and strengthen our love to our country! But, if I am forbidden to entertain this hope, I will still flatter myself, that what I have said

may, in some small degree, assist in making you hesitate before you again plunge us into another long and sanguinary war. I am, &c. &c.

WM. COBBETT.

PRESENT STATE OF FRANCE.

It is a truth, confirmed by universal history, that the happiness or misery of a people depends almost entirely upon the principles of their government, and the conduct of their rulers. Wherefore is it that in Europe there is more comforts enjoyed, and greater progress made in the arts and sciences, than in Asia? It is because the Asiatic governments are more despotic and tyrannical than the European. It is from a similar cause that the improvement of society in Spain, and in Portugal, is, at the present moment, a century, at least, behind our own country. It is following this criterion only, by adopting it as a rule to form the judgment, that we shall be able, at all times, to arrive at correct ideas respecting the condition of any people. Whenever we abandon this guide, we give ourselves up to error, and to all its consequent evils; we become, by habit, the creatures of prejudice; and we seldom discover our mistake till dear bought experience has taught us the folly of our departure from truth. In nothing is the mistakes, which have arisen in consequence of this departure from rectitude, more obvious and extravagant, than in the opinions now almost generally prevailing as to the present state of society in France. Fully aware that the improvement which has taken place there, since the revolution, in the condition of the people, is the best proof that can be given of the superior excellence of the government, almost all our political writers, particularly our news-paper press, have unceasingly represented the people of France to be completely demoralized, her fields uncultivated, her manufactures annihilated, and the whole aspect of the country reduced to a state of dreary waste and desolation. It was by base attempts like these that a too successful clamour against the republicans was first excited; that the nations of Europe were infuriated to embark in a bloody contest, and that they continued, for upwards of twenty years, to sacrifice their lives for the establishment of that "Social System," and

that "holy religion," which, it is said, had been overthrown and profaned by the jacobins of France. The repose which the treaty of Paris had given to the continent, has served in a great measure to dissipate the delusion. Liberal minded and sensible men, who could not understand how a country demoralized and debased as France was represented to be, should be able to maintain its existence against the combined attacks of Europe, were desirous to satisfy themselves as to the cause of this unaccountable phenomenon. They visited France; they observed the customs and manners of the people; they investigated the progress of the arts, of manufactures, of agriculture, of Education; they particularly informed themselves as to the national character of the people, and the general aspect of the country; and the result of these inquiries, and observations has been, that the public are now in possession of a *real picture* of France, drawn from actual survey, by persons of undoubted credit, and who were under no temptation whatever to give a false colouring to the subject. Of the many works which have issued from the press on the present state of France, I have seen none so well calculated to give correct ideas respecting it, as that published by *Mr. Birbeck*. It is entitled "Notes of a Journey through France from Dieppe through Paris and Lyons to the Pyrennees, and back through Toulouse, in July, August and September, 1814; describing the habits of the people, and the agriculture of the country."—It is my intention, as already stated, to give a summary or analysis of this valuable production. It will form a striking contrast to the view of society and manners in France, before the revolution, as given by *Mr. Arthur Young*, and which has already appeared in the Register. The reader will observe that *Mr. Birbeck* is not an admirer of Napoleon. On the contrary, he freely censures what he considers reprehensible in his conduct, and more than once stigmatizes him with the epithet of "*tyrant*."—Yet it was under the Government of this "*tyrant*" that France made such prodigious progress, in the arts and sciences, and has acquired so high a character for moral conduct, and, what may be truly called the glory of a nation, for the strict inte-

grity of her people.—After some preliminary remarks on the appearance of the houses, &c. at Dieppe, where *Mr. Birbeck* and his friends landed, he proceeds as follows.

Walking near the barracks, I was struck with the respectable appearance of the soldiers; several were seated under the trees, reading.—In the evening the streets, the boulevards, the bourse, every convenient place was filled with groups of people, of all descriptions, engaged in conversation. No rudeness in the men, no levity in the females; politeness and cheerful, sincere, good humour prevailing on all sides. How different, thought I, from an evening scene in a British sea-port! Yet Dieppe is said to be one of the coarsest places in France. There is more appearance of enjoyment, and less of positive suffering than I ever beheld before, or had any conception of; but it is not the sort of enjoyment which suits my habits; I question if I could be happy in their way. What a pains-taking unfortunate race are we! So busy about living, that we really have not time to live! and our recreations have so much of vice in them, that serious folks have imagined it impossible to be both merry and wise. The people here, though infinitely behind us in the accommodations of life, seem to be as much our superiors in the art of living. I am informed that all the children of the labouring class learn to read; and are generally taught by their parents. The relation between a good education and good morals might be studied here, to advantage, by the opposers of our improved modes of teaching the children of the poor.

On the subject of Education, our author afterwards says, that at Deville—

At a very poor inn, in a remote village, where we stopped on our morning's ride, the landlady kept a child's school, and her daughter was weaving cotton check; her sister kept a little shop, and was reading a translation of Young's Night Thoughts. This was more than we should have expected, in a village Ale-house, in England.

The habits of the people more towards the South, he thus describes:

Having quitted the Pyrennees, and entered on a district, where, instead of small fields, numerous villages, and a thick population, are large towns, large divisions of land, and fewer people; I have to remark, on taking leave of my mountain friends, that their poverty is more in appearance than reality. They have frugal habits; and consider as luxuries, some things which may perhaps be among the necessaries of life in the estimation of their lowland neighbours. They are not an

alms-taking indigent peasantry; but laborious and independent; living upon little, and heedless how: but nothing of the negligence which is the constant companion of hopeless poverty, is discoverable in their fields; on the contrary, these are cultivated with garden-like exactness. Their lands and their cattle shew that they are far removed from beggary and want. In the richer tracts, where their little estates are productive with moderate toil, the inhabitants are living in great plenty and comfort. Those beautiful and fertile vallies which converge at Tarascon, seem to unite lowland abundance with mountain simplicity.

On the labouring class, and farm Servants, *Mr. Birbeck* has furnished the following interesting facts, which I have extracted from his work without any regard to the order in which they are there placed.

On my first landing, I was struck with the respectable appearance of the labouring class; I see the same marks of comfort and plenty, every where as I proceed. I ask for the wretched peasantry, of whom I have heard and read so much; but I am always referred to the revolution; it seems they vanished, then.—Wages about 1amel; 20d. a day the men; 10d. to 15d. the women. Asked some men who were digging in a vineyard, how many shirts they had;—fifteen to twenty, “*suivant la personne*,” was the reply. I have met with this unequivocal proof of riches in every part of the country. The labouring class, formerly the poor, are now rich, in consequence of the national domains having been sold in small allotments, at very low rates, and with the indulgence of five years for completing the payment. Thus there are few labourers or domestic servants who are not proprietors of land.

Lying between the Pyrennees and the Mediterranean, Roussillon enjoys mountain gales and sea breezes, with the fertility of a southern vale, and, what adds much to the delights of this paradise, a happy peasantry. *M. ———* confirmed my general observations on this head. He also informed me that it was usual for a youth of sixteen, to hire himself, as a domestic servant in agriculture; and, when he arrives at twenty-one or twenty-two, to have laid up 400 or 600 francs, 18l. or 20l. sterling. With 400 francs, he buys a cottage and marries: his wife has probably a little portion. He has an opportunity also of buying 1500 square toises (nearly an acre and half English) of uncultivated mountain land, rocky and poor, but fit for vines: for this he pays fifteen or twenty francs, and becomes a proprietor; having a constant resource of profitable industry, in winter, when work may be scarce. Wages, in

the busy season (which is of pretty long duration, including harvest and threshing, then the vintage, and afterwards the olives) 40 sous and board, women 25 sous, without board. The allowance of board is 3lb of bread, 1lb of meat, besides vegetable dishes, such as haricos, &c and three bottles of wine, per day: in harvest and threshing, six bottles of wine. The pound French, is about equal to 18 ounces, English.

The Shepherd is a wealthy man. His wife shewed us her ample stores of home-spun linen. She sows the hemp, prepares and spins it herself. The labouring class here [at Isy near Paris] is certainly much higher, on the social scale, than with us. Every opportunity of collecting information on this subject confirms my first impression, that there are very few really poor people in France. In England a poor man and a labourer are synonymous terms; we speak familiarly of *the poor*, meaning the labouring class: not so here. I have now learnt enough to explain this difference: and having received the same information from every quarter, there is no room to doubt its correctness.

The general character of the French, and the beneficial effects which the revolution has produced, particularly on the habits of the people, are thus spoken of:

The approach to Rouen is noble: every object denotes prosperity and comfort. Since I entered the country I have been looking, in all directions, for the ruins of France: for the horrible effects of the revolution, of which so much is said on our side of the water: but instead of a ruined country, I see fields highly cultivated, and towns full of inhabitants. No houses tumbling down, or empty, no ragged, wretched-looking people. I have enquired, and every body assures me, that agriculture has been improving rapidly for the last twenty-five years; that the riches and comforts of the cultivators of the soil have been doubled during that period; and that vast improvement has taken place in the condition and character of the common people. In the early part of the revolution, more was done in the promoting the instruction of the lower order than the sinister policy of the late Emperor was able to destroy: and, though much remains to be desired on this point, enough has been effected to shew that a well-educated commonalty would not be wanting in industry or subordination. The National Domains, consisting of the confiscated estates of the church and the emigrant nobility, were exposed to sale during the pecuniary distresses of the revolutionary government in small portions, for the accommodation of the lowest order of purchasers, and five years allowed for completing the payment. This indulgence, joined to the depreciation of assignats, enabled the poorest description of peasants to

become proprietors; and such they are almost universally; possessing from one to ten acres. And as the education of the poor was sedulously promoted during the early years of the revolution, their great advance, in character as well as condition, is no mystery. I prefer the country character of France to that of the city. In the former, the good fruits of the Revolution are visible at every step: previous to that era, in the country, the most numerous class, the bulk of the population, all but the nobles and the priests, were wretchedly poor, servile and thievish. This class has assumed a new character, improved in proportion to the improvement of its condition. Servility has vanished with their poverty; their thievishness, an effect of the same cause, has also in great measure disappeared.

As a proof of the honest disposition of the lower orders, *Mr. Birbeck* gives the following anecdote of a postillion:

On our arrival at our hotel, the postillion demanded double for the last post, as a *Poste Royale*; armed a *P'Anglois* at all points against imposition, I objected; he proposed going to the *Bureau des Postes*, to prove his right; I, curious to be introduced to a French Authority, willingly consented, and away we went to the *Bureau des Postes*: there he established his claim. On returning to the hotel to his voiture and horses, an article of our baggage was missing; the postillion declared he had not seen it, and as we could not ascertain at what place it had been left, it was given up as lost; it was a *sac de nuit*, containing sundries of some value. In three days the same postillion left our *sac* at the hotel unopened, not an article missing: he had traced it back until he found it; and considering the mode of our settlement, it was more than we expected. I give it as a sample of French honesty and regard for character. As another instance of the same kind; a postillion galloped after us three miles, with a small article which had been overlooked in shifting the luggage.

In several points I found the French character different from what I had conceived it, from the common report. There is a sort of independence, an uprightness of manner, denoting equality and the consciousness of it, which I was not prepared for. This is sometimes, in the lower class, accompanied by something like American roughness, and is not altogether agreeable to our habits. In general however they are extremely attentive to good manners in their intercourse with each other, and with their superiors; but you may look in vain for that deference, bordering on servility which we are accustomed to from our dependants; who are, notwithstanding, free born Englishmen.

—I have had constant occasion to remark the excellent condition of the labouring class; their decent respectable appearance. This was more than I had expected.

The decorum of manners in both sexes which prevails universally, surprised and delighted me beyond expression. Here are none of those exhibitions of profligacy, which disgust you at every step, even in our country villages. No ragged wretches staggering home from a filthy alehouse. One drunken man, and but one, I saw in all my journey. Now, this is not to be attributed to abject poverty, absolutely depriving them of the means of intoxication, as might have been the case before the revolution: on the contrary, wine and brandy are cheap, and the earnings of the labourer are at least one third more in proportion than in England. Such is the habitual temperance of the description of people who with us are most addicted to drinking, that the inns, frequented by postillions and waggoners, seldom have any liquor stronger than their ordinary wine. If you call for brandy, they are obliged to send for it to the *Café*. The manager of an iron forge was describing to me the severe labour which the workmen performed before their immense fires: I enquired about their drinking, and he assured me that they never drank even their own weak wine without water. Intimately connected with the temperance of the men is the modesty of the women, and equally exemplary.

A habit of economy and frugality, accompanied by a perfect indifference to stile and shew, is another characteristic of the French nation, extending through all ranks: and entirely inconsistent with the fashionable frivolity which has been attributed to them. I am a countryman, and it is France as a country that I came to visit and am describing, not Paris in particular. The exceptions to my statement will be found in the latter, where no doubt there are too many examples of every enormity. Yet Paris itself will bear me out when compared with London.

I had heard much of French beggars, and there are too many to be seen hovering around the post-houses, and on the hills of the great roads, especially north of Paris: they are mostly very old or blind people who follow begging as a profession, without exhibiting marks of extreme poverty, being often neatly, and even well, clad. Beggars seem to be an essential part of the Catholic system, affording occasion for the meritorious work of giving alms: but as the amount required to constitute a title to reward has not been exactly stated, very small coins are chiefly in request for that purpose, and people generally carry a store of them. One of my fellow travellers from Clermont, who was on his way to Paris, I believe, to purchase an estate,

was a fine example of French economy, and Catholic charity united. He gave a beggar a sous, and took back two liards in change.

The following very interesting particulars, as to the occupations of the fair sex, are highly deserving of consideration:

In every part of France women employ themselves in offices which are deemed with us unsuitable to the sex. Here there is no sexual distinction of employment: the women undertake any task they are able to perform, without much notion of fitness or unfitness. This applies to all classes. The lady of one of the principal clothiers at Louviers, conducted us over the works; gave us patterns of the best cloths; ordered the machinery to be set in motion for our gratification, and was evidently in the habit of attending to the whole detail of the business. Just so, near Rouen, the wife of the largest farmer in that quarter, conducted me to the barns and stables; shewed me the various implements, and explained their use: took me into the fields, and described the mode of husbandry, which she perfectly understood; expatiated on the excellence of their fallows; pointed out the best sheep in the flock, and gave me a detail of their management in buying their wether lambs and fattening their wethers. This was on a farm of about 400 acres. In every shop and warehouse you see similar activity in the females. At the royal porcelain manufactory at Sevres, a woman was called to receive payment for the articles we purchased. In the Halle de Bled, at Paris, women, in their little counting-houses, are performing the office of factors, in the sale of grain and flour. In every department they occupy an important station, from one extremity of the country to the other.

In many cases, where women are employed in the more laborious occupations, the real cause is directly opposite to the apparent. You see them in the south, threshing, with the men, under a burning sun;—it is a family party threshing out the crop of their own freehold: a woman is holding a plough;—the plough, the horses, the land is her's; or, (as we have it) her husband's; who is probably sowing the wheat which she is turning in. You are shocked on seeing a fine young woman loading a dung cart; it belongs to her father, who is manuring his own field, for their common support. In these instances the toil of the woman denotes wealth rather than want; though the latter is the motive to which a superficial observer would refer it. Who can estimate the importance, in a moral and political view, of this state of things? Where the women, in the complete exercise of their mental and bodily faculties, are performing their full share of the duties of life. It is the natural, healthy condition of Society. Its influence on the

female character in France is a proof of it. There is that freedom of action, and reliance on their own powers, in the French women, generally, which occasionally, we observe with admiration in women of superior talents in England.

The contrast drawn by our author between the ancient nobility and the present occupiers of land in France, possesses no small degree of interest:

The ancient nobility, before the revolution, were not very refined in their mode of living at their chateaux. These houses, generally in a ruinous state and badly furnished, were occasionally visited by their owners, accompanied probably by a party of guests, and a numerous tribe of domestics. These visits were the result of caprice sometimes; often of necessity: to recover fresh vigor for the expences of Paris: but rarely for the true enjoyment of the country. Their appearance was not welcomed by their tenants, from whom certain extra services were then required. Provisions of all kinds, grain, fish, fowl, all were in requisition. The dependants, almost plundering, and insolent of course. The gentry, spending their time at cards or billiards; or promenading in their strait lined gardens, in stiff Parisian dresses, were only known on their estates to be hated and despised. A better spirit prevails at present. Proprietors have acquired a touch of the country gentleman, and are cultivating their estates; whilst the tenants are relieved from degrading corvees and other odious oppressions. Still, much is wanting to render a country residence inviting to those who cannot be satisfied in the society of their own domestic circle; or who may not be blessed with a numerous and happy family. When capital, in the hands of well educated men, begins to be directed to rural affairs, a foundation is laid for a better state of society. A broad foundation of this sort has been already laid in France. Thanks to the Revolution!—

We have heard much respecting the Police, and the number of crimes in Tradesmen. Many have gone so far as to attribute the increase of crimes with us to a defect in our laws of police.—But whatever may be in this, it is clear from *Mr. Birbeck's* statement, that crimes are by no means so prevailing there as in this country.

Whilst waiting for my passport of departure, at the Bureau of the Prefecture, many persons were receiving passports of removal from one section of Paris to another. A strictness of police of which I before had no conception. I imagine a register is kept of the inhabitants of every house; and from the arrangement of the numerous clerks in this long

and commodious apartment, called the Bureau des Passports, I have no doubt but this important object is attained without difficulty or confusion. I presume passports are procured without much trouble or any expence to the parties: they are therefore not likely to be neglected by any but the evil disposed; and as general security is the aim, and in a great degree the result, of these seemingly severe regulations, they may be submitted to with cheerfulness. A police of this kind must prevent the existence of such hordes of banditti as infest our metropolis. Here can be no dark and inscrutable recesses where villains by profession may collect in a mass, and conspire against the public. This is the fair side. How much these regulations favour political tyranny, I am not qualified to say; but here I suspect mischief. However, the clerks in this office appear to be a civil, respectable set, and much better employed in preventing crimes, and are probably better men, than the swarm of police officers, with us, who live by them; who, by overlooking small offences, nurse up the criminals to that eminence in guilt, which entitles the thief-taker to a reward. Security of person and property, two great ends of Society, are attained in a higher degree under the French than under the English system.

Prevention of crimes is the very spirit of the former, which pervades every place, and meets you at every turn. In the country, the Gardes champetres, a revolutionary institution, are the great means, always in activity, of crushing them in the egg. One or more of these officers is appointed in every commune, whose duty it is to prevent all petty depredations, and even trespasses out of the public paths. In every case they may arrest the offender, and carry him before the mayor of the commune, who levies a penalty according to law. These men are always on the alert; armed, mostly with a pike, sometimes with a gun; and are authorized to use force in case of resistance. In towns, the preventive police is performed by the military, and most effectually. Being under the direction of the civil power, if such a force must be maintained, perhaps this is the best mode of employing it. The regularity and strictness of military discipline, form the French soldiers into excellent civil guards, and the end is so beneficial that the means may well be tolerated. The Gardes champetres are so watchful and alert, that they seem to possess a sort of ubiquity which is very effectual in preventing petty depredations. Walking up a hill from Gorceil, I strayed into a vineyard by the road side. The grapes were miserable; small as currants, and unripe. To plunder was the last thing I should have thought of; however I picked a little bunch. As I came out of the vineyard, a stout young fellow,

with a pike in his hand, met me, and civilly enquired if the grapes were good. "Les raisins sont ils bons?" "Non," replied I. "Comme ça;" and shewed him the bunch I had gathered. You must go with me "a la Ville," says he, "devant le Maire." I remonstrated—he threatened: at length he consented to let me off for a frank. This I should not have complied with, if my company had not been forward, and waiting for me; but would have paid the legal penalty before the mayor. In the south, where vineyards are universal, the same degree of strictness would not have appeared in this particular, but the watchful spirit is perceived every where.

With a Government really Representative, such a police would not be an engine of oppression: and to estimate its value in comparison with a vindictive police, such as that of England, we must consider the wretchedness of the agent of a criminal act, as well as the suffering of its object. Its watchful character renders pilfering unprofitable and dangerous, therefore it is not followed as a profession: a man rises to an accomplished villain by degrees, therefore the prevention of small offences hinders the commission of atrocious crimes.

(To be continued.)

MARSHAL MARMONT.

SIR,—At the time the influence of the allies caused the defection of the Duke of Ragusa from Napoleon, the Duke was stationed at the head of *forty thousand* of the finest troops in the French service, to act as a screen on Paris, on the approach of the allies to that capital. This command formed an important post in the plan of a master-piece of Generalship, by the execution of which, had Marmont only remained faithful, the allies would have fallen in the hands of Napoleon. When the Duke of Ragusa consented to betray Napoleon, he detached *twenty thousand* of these troops from his army; sending them quite out of the way; the affectionate devotion to the cause of their country, and the enthusiastic attachment to Napoleon of the whole of this veteran army, rendering even the remaining *twenty thousand* men a formidable corps. To these the Duke of Ragusa contrived to have *thirty* pound shot served out, although their *largest guns carried only TWENTY pounds*; and so minutely did he enter into the details of treachery, that he caused SAND to be mixed with the powder

which was to be used by these brave fellows!!!—The attempt made by the Duke of Ragusa to vindicate his conduct towards Napoleon, obliges me, in common justice, to refute all his laboured defence, by this plain statement of FACTS: for confirmation of the truth of which, I appeal to the survivors of all those brave soldiers, whom he THUS left to be SLAUGHTERED!! I am, &c.

MIRATOR.

Clifton, April 13, 1815.

THE ADDRESS.

MR. COBBETT.—In the Regent's Message to Parliament, we are told, that the events which have recently occurred in France, threaten consequences highly dangerous to the tranquillity and independence of Europe. Let us pause here for a moment, and consider whether or not this broad assertion be true.—Bonaparte, we know, has declared his determination to rest on the Treaty of Paris; he has declared that he will not invade other countries, but only defend himself against foreign attack. In what then consists the danger to the tranquillity and independence of Europe? Why should not all Europe continue in the present state of peace? France has, by a calm Revolution, changed her Ruler; Louis left the throne, and Napoleon took it; and it is clear that Napoleon is the choice and approbation of the French People. Who dare dispute the right of the People to the choice of their Rulers? In what respect then does this simple, but wonderful change endanger the tranquillity of Europe? We are told that there is to be an augmentation of his Majesty's land, and sea forces. For what purpose is this augmentation? Will not this augmentation of land and sea forces lead to an augmentation of land and sea taxes? Is not the whole world now in a state of Peace, and ought not every thing to return to a peace establishment? Must we be for ever in the expensive attitude of war, because the tranquillity of Europe may, some time or other, be disturbed? Who is to disturb it? At one time, the Emperor of Russia; at another time the King of Prussia; at another, Napoleon Bonaparte, or Louis the 18th, 19th, or 20th; may be said to endanger it. And so we are to be perpetually burdened with increasing taxes, because the tranquillity and inde-

pendence of Europe may be possibly disturbed. Ministers, I have no doubt, ardently desire war. But war does not suit them just at present. They must communicate with the Allies. Some of them may have been offended at Congress. They want also large subsidies. The property tax, or something like it, will be the next ministerial measure. And soon after war will be declared against France. I hope I am mistaken, but a short time will determine.

Yours, &c. &c. G. G. F.

London, April 12th, 1815.

LORD COCHRANE.

His Lordship has addressed a Letter "To his Constituents," in which he fully explains his motives for leaving the King's Bench prison, and the objects he had in view in taking his seat in the House of Commons. Justice requires that this publication should be read, before any one ventures to censure the conduct of his Lordship. I have no room for more than the following extracts:—

"I have heard much about the duty of submitting to the laws, but not enough to inspire me with reverence for iniquity exercised under legal appearances. It is not by him who resists injustice committed under the forms of law, but by him who makes those forms the instruments and the cloke of injustice, that the laws are violated. I did not, however, quit these walls to escape from personal oppression, but at the hazard of my life to assert that right to liberty which as a member of the community I have never forfeited, and that right which I received from you, to attack in its very den, the corruption which threatens to annihilate the liberties of us all. I did not quit them to fly from the justice of my country, but to expose the wickedness, fraud, and hypocrisy of those who elude that justice by committing their enormities under the colour of its name. I did not quit them from the childish motive of impatience under suffering: I stand long enough here to evince that I could en-

due restraint as a pain, but not as a penalty. I staid long enough to be certain that my persecutors were conscious of their injustice; and to feel that my submission to their unmerited inflictions was losing the dignity of resignation, and sinking into the ignominious endurance of an insult.

“Gentlemen; if it had not been for the commotion excited by that obnoxious, injurious, and arbitrary measure, the Corn Bill, which began to evince itself on the day of my departure from prison, (which was on the anniversary of my escape from similar oppression at Malta four years before,) I should have lost no time in proceeding to the House of Commons: but conjecturing that the spirit of disturbance might derive some encouragement from my unexpected appearance at that time, and having no inclination to promote tumult, I resolved to defer my appearance at that House, and, if possible, to conceal my departure from the Prison, until the order of the Metropolis should be restored. I had, however, been out but a few days when I received intimation that a Committee of the House of Commons appointed to enquire into the state of the Prison, had discovered that I was absent. Conceiving that they would communicate the circumstance, and anxious to obviate any false impressions as to my motives and intentions, I immediately addressed the following Letter to the Speaker, which I fully expected he would have read to the House:

London, March, 9, 1815.

“Sir: I respectfully request that you will state to the Honourable the House of Commons, that I should immediately and personally have communicated to them my departure from the custody of Lord Ellenborough, by whom I have

been long most unjustly detained; but I judged it better to endeavour to conceal my absence, and to defer my appearance in the House until the public agitation excited by the Corn Bill, should subside. And I have further to request that you will also communicate to the House that it is my intention on an early day to present myself for the purpose of taking my seat, and moving an Inquiry into the conduct of Lord Ellenborough.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,
COCHRANE.”

“Gentlemen: If the Right Honourable the Speaker had thought proper to comply with my request; if he had read my Letter to the House, as he afterwards read that which he received from the Marshal of the King's Bench, relative to my apprehension; the scandalous reports which appeared in the hireling Journals, attributing my conduct to criminal or contemplative motives, could not have been invented or propagated.

“I did not go to the House of Commons to complain about losses or sufferings; about fine or imprisonment; or of property to the amount of ten times the fine, of which I have been cheated by this malicious Prosecution. I did not go to the House to complain of the mockery of having been heard in my defence, and answered by a reference to that Decision from which that Defence was an Appeal. I did not go there to complain of those who expelled me from my Profession: for if I could have stooped to the Enemies of my Country at home, I might still have been instrumental in humbling its Enemies abroad. I did not go to the House to complain, generally, of the Advisers of the Crown: but I went there to complain of the conduct of him—